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Reports

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Friends, Foes, and Future Directions: U.S. Partnerships in a Turbulent World. RAND Corporation. Hans Binnendijk. January 2016.

The report evaluates three broad strategies for dealing with U.S. partners and adversaries in Europe, Asia, and the Middle East in a time of diminishing defense budgets and an American public preference for a domestic focus. The three strategies are to be more assertive, to be more collaborative, or to retrench from international commitments. All three of these alternative approaches are constrained and a balance will need to be struck among them, that balance may differ from region to region. In general, however, the United States may need to follow a more collaborative approach in which it seeks greater collaboration and burden sharing from strong partners who have until now not been pulling their weight.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR1200/RR1210/RAND_RR1210.pdf
[PDF format, 184 pages, 1.1 MB].

Item#2

Foresight Africa: Top Priorities for the Continent in 2016. Brookings Institution. January 14, 2016.

Africa is at a tipping point in 2016. Despite all the success the continent has achieved in recent years, new and old dangers, economic, political, and security-related, threaten to derail its progress. With sound policymaking, effective leadership, and enough foresight, however, according to the report, Africa can meet and defeat these challenges as well as the many more to come. The report discusses six overarching themes that place Africa at this tipping point and give their view on what they perceive to be key areas for intervention to keep Africa on its current rising trajectory.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Research/Files/Reports/2016/01/foresight-africa/foresightafrica2016_fullreport.pdf?la=en [PDF format, 110 pages, 1.21 MB].

<http://www.brookings.edu/research/reports2/2016/01/foresight-africa-top-priorities> [HTML format, with links to individual chapters].

Item#3

Warming World Promises More Refugees. YaleGlobal. Richard D. Lamm. January 14, 2016.

Climate change combined with war and a growing population could pose challenges of unimaginable magnitude. "Last summer's Mediterranean crisis, a migration of Biblical proportions from Syria to Europe, is likely merely a preview of the dislocation to come," writes Lamm. "It is not too apocalyptic to consider the possibility that ultimately a warming world cannot support the 9 billion human beings anticipated by 2050." Those in government and industry cannot assume a world without limits, and some, including the U.S. Pentagon and insurance analysts, already draft policies preparing for consequences of climate change. Generosity alone is not enough to handle all challenges. Excuses and surprise about new crises wear thin, and world leaders have a responsibility to anticipate and plan.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/warming-world-promises-more-refugees> [HTML format, various paging].

Item#4

The US Faces Rival Powers Waging Hybrid Warfare. YaleGlobal. Richard Weitz. January 12, 2016.

Overall, global military spending decreased in 2014 from the previous year, reports the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. The United States spends more than other countries on defense, yet struggles against the skillful use of hybrid tactics by China and Russia, explains Richard Weitz. Weitz explains that “both authoritarian states have applied various military, paramilitary, legal, economic and information tools in the western Pacific and Eurasia to expand their regional influence, divide potential opponents and otherwise seize the strategic initiative.” The West must analyze the various hybrid tactics and develop rapid responses that include technology and counter media-messaging.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/us-faces> [HTML format, various paging].

Item#5

Defense Institution Building in Africa: An Assessment. RAND Corporation. Michael J. McNerney et al. January 4, 2015.

The report assesses U.S. efforts in defense institution building in Africa and suggests possible improvements to planning and execution.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR1200/RR1232/RAND_RR1232.pdf [PDF format, 195 pages, 1.2 MB].

Item#6

Voters Skeptical That 2016 Candidates Would Make Good Presidents. Pew Research Center. January 20, 2016.

A year before the next president takes office, voters are skeptical that any of the leading 2016 candidates would make a good president. Moreover, of nine candidates included in the survey, far more voters say each would make a “terrible” than “great” president. The latest national survey by the Pew Research Center, conducted Jan. 7-14 among 2,009 adults, including 1,525 registered voters, finds that 35% of voters say that Hillary Clinton would make either a good or great president, with 11% saying she would be great. More voters (44%) say Clinton would be either poor or terrible in the White House; 28% say she would be terrible. About one-in-five (18%) think Clinton would make an average president.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<http://www.people-press.org/files/2016/01/01-20-2016-2016-release.pdf> [PDF format, 21 pages, 682.1 KB].

Item#7

Worries Over China’s Slowdown Drive Global Markets. YaleGlobal. Farok J. Contractor. January 21, 2016.

Global markets are plummeting, in part a response to slowing growth in China and volatility in the nation's stock markets. "World markets turn needlessly bearish – failing to understand that the Shanghai or Shenzhen markets are not necessarily good indicators of the fundamentals of the Chinese economy or cultural root causes driving Chinese investors," writes Farok Contractor. Cultural trends include China's reputation for frugality and a high savings rate during a period of increased wealth along with a penchant for risk-taking.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/worries-over-china%E2%80%99s-slowdown-drive-global-markets>
[HTML format, various paging].

Item#8

China's Carbon Future: A Model-based Analysis. Brookings Institution. Warwick J. McKibbin et al. December 31, 2015.

In 2007, China took the lead as the world's largest CO₂ emitter. Air pollution in China is estimated to contribute to about 1.6 million deaths per year, roughly 17 percent of all deaths in China. Over the last decade, China has adopted measures to lower the energy and carbon intensity of its economy, partly in response to worsening local air pollution from energy generation. At the 21st Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework on Climate Change (UNFCCC), held in Paris in late 2015, China committed to furthering its efforts by affirming its previously announced goal to cause its emissions to peak around 2030 and to increase the share of non-fossil fuels in its primary energy consumption to around 20 percent by the same year.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Research/Files/Papers/2015/12/31-china-carbon-future/ChinasCarbonFuture.pdf?la=en> [PDF format, 42 pages, 626 KB].

Item#9

Governing Cyberspace: A Road Map for Transatlantic Leadership. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Sinan Ulgen. January 2016.

Cybertechnologies are rapidly changing the international landscape, but leaders in government, business, and elsewhere are just beginning to understand the ramifications, both good and bad, of an interconnected digital world. Weak international governance of cyberspace stands in stark contrast to the accelerating pace of challenges. To shape the regimes that govern cyberspace to the advantage of generations to come, the United States and the European Union should forge a joint policy vision.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

http://carnegieendowment.org/files/Sinan_Cyber_Final.pdf [PDF format, 96 pages, 2.75 MB].

Item#10

Transgender Welcome: A Bishop Makes the Case for Affirmation. Center for American Progress. Bishop Gene Robinson. January 19, 2016.

The resource makes the case for the full inclusion of transgender people in both Jewish and Christian communities of faith and in society, based on Scripture and theology.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<https://cdn.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/15125721/TransFaith-report.pdf> [PDF format, 47 pages, 696.6 KB].

Item#11

The Extensive Abuse of the Student (F-1) Visa. Center for Immigration Studies. David North. January 2016.

There are both blue-collar and white-collar ways to enter America illegally. A disproportionate amount of media attention goes to the illicit crossings of our borders, which is a physical, blue-collar activity. According to North, too little attention is paid to fraud in the immigration system, the avenue provided by the student (F-1) visa. Many aliens fraudulently use the F-1 visa after arriving in the United States, and the migration-management system makes this all too easy. About 40 percent of the illegal alien population of 11 or 12 million have arrived with visas and then overstayed or otherwise abused them.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<http://www.cis.org/sites/cis.org/files/north-f1-panel-handout.pdf> [PDF format, 3 pages, 992.93 KB].

Item#12

Parents, Teens and Digital Monitoring. Pew Research Center. Monica Anderson. January 7, 2016.

The widespread adoption of various digital technologies by today's teenagers has added a modern wrinkle to a universal challenge of parenthood, specifically, striking a balance between allowing independent exploration and providing an appropriate level of parental oversight. Digital connectivity offers many potential benefits from connecting with peers to accessing educational content. But parents have also voiced concerns about the behaviors teens engage in online, the people with whom they interact and the personal information they make available. Indeed, these concerns are not limited to parents. Lawmakers and advocates have raised concerns about issues such as online safety, cyberbullying and privacy issues affecting teens.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

http://www.pewinternet.org/files/2016/01/PI_2016-01-07_Parents-Teens-Digital-Monitoring_FINAL.pdf [PDF format, 34 pages, 880.75 KB].

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